1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 BellaCoola NE6

133 tains. From each pocket between these mountains an ice-
cold affluent comes swirling down to the main river. The
137 predominant tree in the river valleys is the cedar[1] which in
many cases attains great girth and height. Cottonwoods
flourish in places, and everywhere there is an almost impene-
trable undergrowth of devil's club, berry bushes, and other
shrubbery of almost tropical density. On the lower slopes of
the mountains, moss-festooned pines and spruces are the most
common trees, gradually becoming smaller and fewer until the
133 barren peaks are reached. The mountains rise so precipitously
that their snowcaps and glaciers seem to overhang the valley,
a narrow ribbon of green winding far below. The range of
vision from the bank of the river is limited by the all-encircling
mountains. Here and there a distant vista opens up to expose
peak after peak, but on the whole there is a feeling of confine-
ment, in contrast with the open wastes of the upper country
where the Bella Coola rises. Mountains, forests, flowing water,
these are the three dominant impressions of the country (see
Plate 6).

136 The mammals of central British Columbia, although com-
paratively common, have never been of primary importance.
[291] The marten, the wolverine, the lynx, and bears, both black
[262] and grizzly, were formerly hunted for their skins to serve as
cloaks. Deer were killed whenever possible, but formed a
negligible item of diet. The beaver also was prized for its
[439] flesh. The skins of moose and caribou were traded from the
Carrier Indians, but neither of these animals was found in the
[286] Bella Coola area. The mammal of greatest economic impor-
[237] tance was the mountain goat, the wool of which was woven into
blankets. Smoked goat meat was formerly found in every
[251] house and was almost the only flesh available during the
[262] winter. Small game was abundant, but seals were a luxury.
[223] Neither were birds of great importance to the Bella Coola.
Members of the tribe resident near the sea-coast used to kill

[1] Appendix C contains a glossary of the scientific names of the flora and fauna mentioned in this monograph.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

quantities of ducks and geese, and the inhabitants of the inland villages sometimes made hunting expeditions to the nesting places of wild-fowl in the lakes of the interior uplands. Although numbers of birds were sometimes killed in this way, they were never a steady article of diet. The same is true of grouse. Always plentiful, these birds were commonly killed, but never in large numbers.

The basis of the food supply was fish. The river teemed with salmon, which enabled the country to support its relatively large population. Spring, sockeye, hump-back, dog, and cohoe salmon, all entered the river in thousands during the spring and summer, while the steel-head could be caught throughout the year. They were taken in weirs and their flesh smoked for winter use. Throughout the year, salmon was the principal article of diet. Second in importance was the olachen, a fish somewhat resembling a herring, which entered the river in great numbers during April or May. They were taken in purse-like nets,* allowed to rot for ten days or two weeks, and then boiled. The grease was skimmed off and kept indefinitely to be used as a relish for other foods. It was always a sign of poverty if a person were obliged to eat berries without olachen grease. Trout and bull-heads were found in the river, but were not sufficiently plentiful to be of importance.

Although no form of agriculture was practised, the Bella Coola used vegetable food to a considerable extent. Berries were abundant; some were eaten raw, but many more were pounded into a pulpy mass and dried in the sun. Cakes prepared in this way kept indefinitely and formed one of the regular winter foods. The bark of the hemlock and cottonwood was eaten, as well as the roots of many plants. In recent years many of these have not been used, so that an investigator is apt to overlook their great importance in early times. Although useless for food, the cedar was the corner-stone of Bella Coola material culture. From its trunk were split out, with wedges, the wide planks which formed

*See Appendix A for a description of olachen fishing.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

He is especially rich in caribou-skins, used for foot covering, and goat-skins, so treasured for their wool.[1] He and his wife have laid up abundant food, and, most important of all, his wife's family is wealthy. Rumours have spread that X will soon give a potlatch and perhaps one or more foreign chiefs has given him a large cone-shaped whistle, such as is used in *swaok* ritual (see Plate 12). These whistles, called *qomo·ts*, are often referred to as the "breath" or "voice" of a chief; they are also called *sloptsta*, the "heart" or "wind" of a chief; a third designation is *nulwinuts*. X carefully conceals a whistle in one of his boxes. Such a present expresses the kindly feeling existing between those akin to one another in that they have risen to a position of eminence above the common crowd. Its receipt spurs a man to greater efforts to amass the wealth necessary for giving a potlatch by keeping before his eyes the realization of what another has done. A rival chief never gives such a present. X returns each whistle secretly at the time of his potlatch.

Early in the autumn X decides that he has almost enough wealth. To complete the essential amount he will not hesitate to borrow from his friends. It is most unusual to be refused, for it is incumbent on X, unless he wishes to lose the esteem of the community, to repay his borrowings with heavy interest, and when X distributes his goods at his potlatch it will be announced how he has obtained them, and the lender is proclaimed as a person of sufficient wealth to be able to spare some of it. Goods so loaned are termed "belt goods," a reference to the manner in which a man fastens up his cape with a belt before setting to work. The assumption is that X will have to labour to repay his indebtedness. Failure to repay is a serious matter, and the lender would be justified in seizing a canoe or other valuable article as surety for his debt; in fact, feuds are commonly caused by unpaid debts. Men of business

[1] Formerly, when goat-skin blankets were highly valued, goats were never shot for fear of the blood staining the wool. Instead, they were cornered by dogs, and choked to death in nooses. For presentation, each skin was laid out on the floor and then cut into longitudinal strips, two, three, or four fingers wide.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE5 Bellacoola NE5

Pre-
* 556 sently the guests assemble, those who are *nuaxé* wearing on
[575] their heads one or more weasel skins as a mark of membership
[237] in the society. Each takes the seat to which he is entitled,
[292] the chiefs behind the fire, or on either side of it, the commoners,
[554] slaves, and foreigners in the two corners nearest the door. The heralds move to and fro between door and fire, their constant exchange of remarks adding to the general interest of the affair. It is the function of a herald to lend dignity to chiefs by
[203] the tone of his observations, but should one fail to live up to his station, the herald is privileged to comment thereon. In some respects his position approximates that of a buffoon, but as a herald always receives valuable presents, the office is sometimes accepted by ambitious young men, willing to undertake the slightly derogatory duties in return for the substantial gain.

264 A number of young lads, friends or relatives of X, distribute
* 556 the food. It is placed in boxes; an important chief is not called upon to share with any one, whereas six or seven men of no
[883] standing may partake from one box. These receptacles, with whatever food remains in them, are taken home by the guests;
[578] otherwise the host would be insulted. Many boxes are lost in this way, a source of considerable irritation. After the first course, a second follows, consisting of a different kind of food in another box, and in some cases there is a third, and even a fourth course. A chief must never appear stingy. The more he gives, the more does his prestige increase. Also, a man who gives freely receives abundantly, so that generosity brings its reward.

583
* 556 Next, the father or other male relative of X's wife, or a
[537] fluent friend who speaks for him, stands up and makes a speech,
[425] extolling the fame of his own family by sketching in general outlines one of the myths of his ancestors, and announcing that
[424] X's wife is taking to her husband some portion of it. This may be the prerogative of using a spoon carved, for example, with
[532] the shape of a beaver; or a carved box, or a totem-pole with certain figures on it, or the right to use a painting of a grizzly bear on the wall of his house, or an ancestral name.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

Poor people, white guests, or others from whom no return can possibly be received, share equally in the distribution; the money goes to all to validate the transaction. On the other hand, X expects that the presents, if any, made to a few individuals after the general distribution, will be returned with interest. In selecting the recipients of these he has been animated, first, by the necessity of repaying old debts, and secondly by his desire to make good investments in the shape of presents to those likely to show their chiefly nature by returning with heavy interest. No request is ever made for such repayment, but as the transaction has been publicly announced, a man fears to fail to repay, since that would lower his prestige. No one may refuse a present, no matter how embarrassing it may be.

After the gifts have been distributed the songs of the initiates are practised. Members of the *nusk* society join in with the singers; the other spectators listen attentively, full of interest, but take no part. X with his helpers then gives food to all, and they depart.

Before the coming of the white man a potlatch was a rare event, and *nusk* members were initiated at local gatherings. The period of confinement was the same as that just described, but instead of merely practising the songs during the interval, the initiates appeared and danced to them. It will be convenient here to describe that ritual, emphasizing the fact that at a potlatch, when the initiates can be confirmed in the presence of foreign guests, this preliminary rite does not take place.

After the distribution of goods the singers beat out[a] the tune of any one of the initiates, and all emerge in close succession from the back-room, each wearing a blanket, without distinctive design, a collar of dyed and pounded cedar-bark decorated with pendant weasel skins, and the distinctive *nusk* head-dress (see Plate 15).[1] This consists of a circlet of grizzly bear claws, surmounted in front by a small forehead mask; from the inner side of the circlet there rise a number of sea-lion

[a] The present tense is used for uniformity.

[1] [See ref. 116, facing p 218 - ANALYST]

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

whiskers over which is scattered eagle down. From the back of the head-dress hang weasel skins. In Bella Bella it is said to be customary for a skin to be added on every occasion when a *tsaxit* is confined to the back-room. This may happen as many as fifteen times to the child of wealthy parents, and a few Bella Coola have adopted the practice of marking each with a skin. Usually, some six or nine are hung in two tiers, without consideration of the number of times the wearer has been in seclusion. The central figure of the forehead mask is a head with a hooked nose, the recurved hook being joined to the face itself. This figure does not vary with the wearer's ancestral myth, and no one knows what it represents. This design is said to have been introduced to Bella Coola from the north a few generations ago; before that time the head-dress consisted of a circular band of dyed cedar-bark, decorated with the tail feathers of one of the large woodpeckers. The Bella Coola call it simply, "forehead mask." Each initiate carries a hollow rattle, carved in the shape of a bird, which he holds in his right hand, belly uppermost. Long, long ago, when a dancer failed to do so, the rattle became alive and the bird flew away; hence, this rule has been obeyed ever since.

Each initiate takes up his station in some part of the house behind the fire and dances to the beating of the sticks. The left hand of each is clasped behind his back and in his right he holds the rattle and keeps it in constant motion by shaking his wrist. Ability to do this is one of the marks of a good dancer. Keeping the body stiff and the legs close together, he rises with slight jumps, barely altering his position on the floor. Sometimes he slowly turns around sunwise[1] in his series of jumps, at other times he does not alter his position. The head is bent from side to side and downwards at each jump, causing the eagle down to fly in all directions. *Tsaxit* assistants blow more of the material on to the head-dress at intervals (see Plate 16).[2]

[1] The Bella Coola believe that the sun moves from east to south to west to north. Many ceremonial movements follow this direction, which will henceforth be described as sunwise.

[2] [See cut 116, facing P 219 - ANALYST]

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

go to the homes of their friends in the village; it is a matter of convenience, not of ritual.

In the evening, there may be no rite of any kind, but X often invites everyone to his house for the performance of non-ceremonial dances. The singers strike up one of his *ɬɬaok* or *a'alk* (I, p. 273) tunes and he dances to it. Then a tune belonging to one of his relatives is beaten out, and he too dances. After several have thus performed, a meal is served and all disperse. No supernatural beings are in attendance, hence there is no solemnity to the occasion; the evening's rites merely serve to show the guests the dances owned by their host and his family.

As each party of guests arrives the same procedure is repeated. X provides food for those who have assembled from day to day, so he anxiously awaits the last-comers. When at last they come the guests from all other towns are in their allotted sections of X's house, and are free to make gibes at the tardiness of those latest in appearing. Occasionally, hard feelings are engendered in this way, although it is an established custom to mock at the last to arrive. They seat themselves and a small amount of food is given them.

RITUAL CARRIED OUT BY THE GUESTS

Two youths, chosen by X for the purpose, sprinkle eagle down over the heads of all those present, as far as possible blowing it first over the chiefs. It serves as a token of goodwill, and marks also the ceremonial nature of the occasion. Then a leading *ɬɬaok*, perhaps a *siki*, stands up and says in effect:

"Thank you for coming. You are welcome. We thank you for coming to witness what X has done. He is delighted to have you here, because he has lost many of his relatives and wishes to perpetuate their memory. They would be grieved if he did not do so."

An elaborate meal is now served by a number of young men.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

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PLATE 15

Sisiok head-dress

[facing p 218]

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

*556 *773 flesh cut from the body is fastened to the point of the spear, making it so potent that when next the chief lunges at a salmon he transfixes it and brings it ashore. He warms the fish at a fire and then pounds it on a stone until it becomes a copper.

No Bella Coola has visited this distant river for many generations and the belief concerning the manufacture of *taitaimx* appears to have been handed down from dim antiquity. Coppers of this kind are said to have been considered much more valuable than the usual *łälia*, but were always uncommon. In addition to their ordinary uses, they had a certain curative value. If the owner of one was ill, he used to clean it [755] with a rough stone and water; then he would drink four cupfuls of the liquid which contained minute fragments of metal. In almost every case a speedy recovery followed. In all other respects *łälia* or *taitaimx* could be used indiscriminately.

Łälia are likewise said to have a supernatural origin. When found in the forest, they are due to the supernatural salmon-[776] like being, *sxsiutł*, having changed itself into one. None has been found in recent years because the *sxsiutł* have moved away owing to their dislike of the smell of human footsteps and the taint of smoke.

These stories serve to emphasize the complete ignorance of [325] the Bella Coola concerning the methods of manufacturing coppers. It is possible that long ago they were able to make their own by pounding the native metal, but if so it is surprising that some traditions to this effect were not preserved. On the other hand, there is little reason to doubt their use of [177] coppers, obtained from the northern tribes, antedating the coming of the whites. All informants agreed on this point, and the frequent references to coppers in mythology likewise point to considerable age. In many of the ancestral myths there are accounts of the obtaining of coppers by some of the [551] first people, and many ancestral names, both of men and women, are derived from them.

[237] The Bella Coola attribute the value of coppers to the fact

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

of their occurrence in most ancestral myths.[4] There seems to be no mythological explanation for the casting of a copper into the fire after the passing of the representation of a deceased relative, but the desire of chiefs to use them at potlatches is the result of their use under similar circumstances by their ancestors. Some ancestral myths lack reference to coppers, but their use is common to all, whether or not embodied in such. It is said to be easier for a chief to acquire coppers if they had been used by his ancestors, but this is not essential.

When arranging for the appearance of a dead relative, the donor of a potlatch is careful either to possess a copper, or to be able to borrow one at the right moment. As soon as the masked figure has disappeared, the donor stands up, breaks or bends his copper, and throws it into the fire "to make bone for the deceased." No matter how valuable a copper may have been, it is now worthless; its value has been expended on the purpose for which it has just been employed. It lies unheeded in the flames, a valueless article belonging to no one.

At some convenient time, either hours or days later, any chief may remove the copper and give it to a poor man, only taking care to choose an individual who has not recently received one. It is said that the gift is "to patch his canoe." It is now the poor man's property, but it has no value, since no goods have been expended for it. The new owner straightens and repairs it, if necessary by riveting on the broken piece, thus making it ready for further use. The poor man may keep the copper for years, or it may be only a few weeks before some chief, preparing for a potlatch, offers, perhaps, $20, for it. In the old days, values were computed in slaves, canoes, salmon, and other commodities, but now in dollars. If two chiefs should happen to want it, the poor man may haggle about the price, though in such a case the two rivals would probably agree amicably rather than lower their dignity by seeming to be interested in a matter of money. It is to the advantage of a

[4] Abalone-shells and moosehides are treasured for the same reason; the former are mentioned in several origin myths, the latter in two at least.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

*539 manner in which he had shielded them from the falling fish. *Sonxwāḵɩs* alone kept his original name.

When returning they made presents of abalone-shell[12] to everyone they met, and reaching Kimsquit they made very valuable gifts to all the people. The four had been absent about six months, and as they approached their home the three elder brothers poked fun at *Älusqox*, saying:

"You will find that your wife has gone to another husband while ours will be waiting for us."

They found the reverse to be true. *Älusqox*'s wife alone had remained faithful to her absent husband; all the others had taken new consorts. The three fickle wives regretted what they had done as soon as they saw the wealth brought back by their former husbands but it was too late to change their course, so they were left lamenting. Many people were rather jealous of *Sonxwāḵɩs*'s success, but he distributed valuable presents to all. Soon after this the three brothers married new wives, refusing to take back their former ones, much as the latter desired it.

Another informant stated that the first settler at this village was a single man, *Swāḵɩs*, who brought a stone hammer as a present from *Älquntām*.

ORIGIN MYTH OF *Nutsqwalt*[13]

In the beginning of time *Älquntām* sent down to the Dean River four brothers, *ɩsyuyuyut*, *Yeālos*, *Spānbātlɩnaix*, *Twalosdimut*, and their sister *Sximāna*. They brought with them a herald, *Nusqwalaix*, who was a kingfisher, and two men, *Xomtsla* and *Qwlaiyu*, who had the prerogative of dancing at weddings. The five came as black bears, and for a long time retained that form. *Yeālos* carried with him from *Nusmāt-a* several moosehides, a stone axe, some dyed cedar-bark, sticks for making fire, and the prerogative of a *kusiut* dance. After tarrying a few days at their landing place, the party set out down the river, with *Nusqwalaix* flying in front as guide. He was a kingfisher at the time and used to make short flights with quivering wings, and then stop until his bear friends had caught up with him, exactly as those birds do at the present time when a canoe travels up a river. On reaching *Nutsqwalt*, "The Place of Many Spawning Sockeye Salmon," about a mile and a quarter from the mouth of the river, on the south-east side, they camped for the night.

[237 301 435]

[12] This was formerly valued very highly, both for its use as beads and ornaments, and because it had to be imported from a great distance.

[13] Related by Jim Pollard.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

the perils of infancy. During this period, the mother observes various magical taboos to ensure the welfare of her offspring, and endeavours to strengthen herself by rubbing her own body with non-odoriferous oils obtained from dog-fish, geese, or fresh olachen. Soft pounded salmon and water are added to an infant's diet as soon as possible, though nourishment from the breast frequently continues until a child is two, or even three years of age. It is not uncommon to delay weaning until the mother is again pregnant, when the child is deterred by the application of soot to the breasts. Marital relations are recommenced as soon as the mother is strong enough; there is no specified period of abstinence, nor does it matter whether or not the woman is lactative.

Occasionally, an infant is born with teeth; such an one is thought to be the reincarnation of a dead ancestor, though no one knows which. A similar belief is held respecting a child with dimples in the lobes of its ears; these are regarded as remnants of the holes pierced for ear-rings. A child that cries in the womb is said to have great intellect.

In former times infanticide was practised for various reasons. If a woman died in giving birth, it was customary for her mother to kill the child unless one of her relatives was able to suckle the motherless infant who was then given to her. It was not unknown for the mother of a large family to ask the midwife to kill the child in order to avoid an addition to her responsibilities. An unmarried girl who became pregnant often went alone to the forest, delivered herself without assistance, and killed her infant. This was considered to be the kindest act, since an illegitimate child was said to be, "Like a Dog." In some cases the prospective mother requested a friend to cause abortion by kneading the stomach and uterus, a method said to be effective and seldom fatal. How to do so is common knowledge, but to practise it is considered disgraceful, and the term *ixwotl*, applied to such an one, is among the most foul of Bella Coola opprobriums. It is believed that a woman who has had several children can in some way prevent

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

*575 796 532 [171] not considered necessary. With few exceptions, hereafter to be noted, *kusiut* masks are burnt at the conclusion of each ceremony, a practice which probably originated in order to avoid the possibility of their being seen by the uninitiated. The Bella Coola state that this is one of the most striking differences between their rites and those of the Bella Bella.

*575 796 534 [237] Next in importance to masks are whistles (see Plate 2).[1] The large, cone-shaped form used in *sisaok* ceremonial is replaced in *kusiut* dances by a smaller type consisting of portions of wood glued together, which can be blown with ease from beneath a concealing blanket. Another type has bellows consisting of a mountain goat bladder, which is held beneath the arm-pit so that it can be worked invisibly. During the summer the whistles are kept by one individual, usually a marshal. Specific information concerning the ownership of these whistles could not be obtained; it appears that any *kusiut* can make one, or have one made for him by a skilled carpenter, and that their retention by one person during the summer is merely for convenience. They are freely lent to anyone for use in a ceremony.

[422]

[426]

*575 796 532 [534] [824] In some dances special objects are used in connection with dramatic performances, such as bull-roarers, wooden representations of animals, birds, or miniature human beings. One old man described a pipe formerly used at *Täl·io*, which had a carved bowl as large as a tea-cup with three radiating stems. It was carved from a knotty excrescence on a beech bole. Little could be learnt of its history, except that it was supposed to have been carved by a chief with the design of his patron and displayed through pride.

*575 609 796 [648] [123] The usual guests at a performance of the type just summarized are the dancer's fellow-villagers and any strangers who happen to be present in the town. Great as is the desire of the *kukusiut* to impress their uninitiated tribesmen, they are still more eager to impress strangers, hence the presence of Carriers adds piquancy to the rites. The writer believes that his presence and interest encouraged the Bella Coola to

[1] [see category 116, p 84(B) - ANALYST]

[Kusiut Society Initiation]

call is that something strange has happened to the "mortal." At intervals throughout the day he repeats this announcement, and towards nightfall goes around calling:

Skinap, skinap, kukusiaot, "Cure, cure, ye members of the *kusiut* society, power has come to the son of the chief [or to the mortal]."

The *kukusiut* assemble in X's house, taking their places around the fire; the uninitiated crowd near the doorway. X is seated among his relatives and some of the senior members of the society behind the fire. A herald calls out:

"I want a *siki* to help X."

In every village there are at least two *kukusiut* who have, embodied with their *kusiut* names, the professional prerogative of acting as healer to every novice; it is believed that the ancestor of each obtained a name and this right through a revelation from some supernatural healer. Since that time the owner of the name has been able to insert some of his own ever-present power into a neophyte to enable him to sustain the dangers of admission to the society. This is the fiction taught to the uninitiated. The profession of *siki* can be transmitted by willing like any other prerogative and it occasionally happens that the same individual is *siki* for both *kusiut* and *susook*. In answer to the herald's call, the two *siki* come forward and crouch behind the fire, one on either side of it. Their faces are blackened with soot, and each wears a blanket, decorated with dyed cedar-bark, thrown loosely over his shoulders, leaving the chest and stomach bare except for an apron of deer hooves or puffin beaks. Meanwhile beating sticks are distributed among most of the *kukusiut* who strike furiously on the floor with them, without any attempt to keep time; the sole object is to produce the greatest din possible.

One of the *siki* contorts himself in an amazing manner, presses his hands against his stomach as if to force something from it, and rolls from side to side on his haunches, until at length he produces, as if from his body, a rock crystal (see Plate 3). He waves this to and fro in his hands, then goes

[see category 116, p 84(C) - ANALYST]

[Kusiut Society Initiation]

X sometimes re-
ceives two prerogatives at his initiation, one from each parent, or from some other interested relative. In this case both are expounded. The singers listen intently, knowing that they will later be called upon to compose songs on the theme, or themes. According to some informants they immediately sing one, as if they had just created it, though it was really prepared in advance. The *kukusiut* listen until they have mastered it.

Helpers now distribute the food provided by X's father, or whoever is responsible for his initiation. At every *kusiut* ceremonial the marshals are the first recipients, then the singers, and finally the others without distinction. As the guests are eating, X's father gives presents to all, without deference to rank. An announcer calls out:

"Here are [for example] ten bear-skins from X's mother. They are to obtain for him his cedar-bark bracelets."

These goods are then distributed. Similarly other gifts from various relatives are handed out for his anklets, his blanket, his collar, his head-dress, and all other parts of his clothing. As each item of his ceremonial costume is validated, X dons the prepared article. A novice's head-dress consists of a round roll of dyed cedar-bark, covering a grass frame; in *Stuix* and the other villages of the upper valley this is decorated with a tuft of swan's down. The *kukusiut* of these villages also wear a distinctive decoration consisting of a swan's skin with the feathers attached. In recent years it has been customary to pile all the goods together and distribute them as *ălq·ll*, which has the significance of "something that has vanished for the novice's dyed cedar-bark." Theoretically, the aim of the donor is to bestow his presents on all equally, but if he finds that he has some remaining, he gives these to the chiefs, or to the relatives of someone whom he expects will soon be a novice. None of the goods used in general distributions are returnable, but a chief who receives an extra gift at the end usually remembers from whom it was received and cancels his indebtedness at the earliest opportunity. There is no close connection between the disbursements and the worth of the

575* 796 [425] [553] [533]

575* 796 556 [264]

[425] [292] [184] [237]

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

[The Dance of Noakxnim]

if he so desires. The *kukusiut* listen to the song, and when it is resung they join in. They practise it repeatedly, until familiar with both words and tune. This part of the ceremony lasts for about two hours.

The singers, and any others who are prepared to beat time, are always provided with long, flat, thin sounding-boards to increase the din of the pounding. When the marshals decide that the song is sufficiently familiar, they tell some of the *kukusiut* to carry these boards to the lowest house of the village. They do this, and also scatter clean sand on the floor, as is customary whenever a supernatural being is to enter. The uninitiated persons within the house watch with great interest. The singers enter and take their places behind the fire, then other *kukusiut* and finally X himself; his face is unblackened, but he wears his two eagle tails in his hair and a collar of dyed cedar-bark. On his head is a thin cylindrical circlet, about four inches high, of the same material, ornamented with swan's down by the inhabitants of the villages of the upper Bella Coola valley. The collar consists of a roll of grass, entirely covered with dyed cedar-bark from which pendant tassels of the same hang down over his chest; similar ones are worn by *sisaok* dancers, except that the tassels hang down their backs. Every *kusiut* dancer wears these two ornaments, and those who have the necessary prerogative adorn themselves with an apron of deer hooves or puffin beaks. Blankets are always worn. *Kukusiut* women wear in addition woollen pubic garments.

As the singers beat out X's tune, accompanied by the voices of themselves and other *kukusiut*, he dances. Since his style is typical of all *kukusiut* except Cannibals and a few others, it will be well to digress at this point in order to describe it. X raises his arms until their upper parts are approximately the height of his shoulders, and project outwards and slightly to the front; they are bent at the elbows with the forearms vertical, thus bringing the hands opposite the top of the head. Both wrists are shaken constantly, the muscles of the lower

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

shals tells a herald to call them in; they enter joyfully, though somewhat fearfully, and stand or crouch on either side of the doorway. In Kimsquit they gaze on the masks, wondering what they are. The singers strike up the first of X's songs and he dances, while singers and *kukusiut* men sing the words and the women drone. To the uninitiated it appears most impressive and desirable, while even the prosaic white man can hardly remain indifferent. At intervals a whistle, which the uninitiated believe to be the voice of the call, sounds eerily from beneath the armpit of a reliable *kusiut*. After a short interval, X's second song is sung, and so in succession the eight. Then the singers strike up any well-remembered tune, perhaps one used last year, and the owner dances. This is repeated for eight or ten songs. At later *qotlum*, every *kusiut* who has had a call during the season must dance; the ceremony tends, therefore, to become longer and longer as time goes on, although the singing of the songs of a previous year is omitted. When enough performers have danced, a shaman's song is often sung and the owner dances "to clear the house." At this point the uninitiated spectators are told to withdraw. Then a meal is served to the *sisaok* who, as members of a similar organization, are honoured guests and have been seated together in a corner, resplendent in their weasel-skin ornaments. After their departure, the *kukusiut* eat more leisurely, while one marshal after another advises them as to their conduct. Then presents of comparatively small value are distributed. The marshals would consider it unbecoming for X to provide over-lavishly. The first gifts are to the singers, the next to the makers of the masks. Though these presents are, in essence, pay, they are never thought of in that light; X is under obligations, X has cleared himself of those obligations, is the Bella Coola attitude. When all is over, X once more dances to one of his softly sung songs. Then one of the marshals calls out to open the door and the guests disperse, except the novices who sleep in X's house.

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

the packers were to meet them. They were not due to arrive for several hours, so *Sānuxʷmāxots* cooked the goat and had a plentiful meal ready for his followers. They asked whether he had had any luck, and he answered casually that his son had killed one, but when they expressed regret at his lack of fortune, *Sānuxʷmāxots* pointed to the pile of dead goats, visible in the distance, and said:

"See what my son killed."

Never before had there been such a slaughter of goats at one time, and it was obvious that no time could be lost if the meat was to be smoked before winter. Fortunately, there was a large cave in the vicinity where they established their headquarters. The packers were divided into two parties; some brought in the carcasses, while others kept a fire smouldering, tended the drying meat, and boiled out the grease. It was a slow process and there was a heavy snowfall before it was finished. The snow drifted into the narrow valley to such a depth that it was impossible to think of leaving. The beleaguered hunters were well provided with food; melted snow gave them water, and the cave was sufficient shelter, so their confinement was more irksome than dangerous. Nor did it prove profitless. The smell of food attracted two martens which were so unafraid that they were killed with sticks. All the hunters began to make traps which soon provided them with enough skins to make several of the much-prized blankets.

So the winter dragged away. The wife of one of the packers had a reputation for faithlessness and her husband's companions used to tease him by saying that his wife would have remarried before he got home. This wore on his nerves until he determined to try to reach the village in spite of the snow. He constructed a pair of snow-shoes and set out, carrying with him enough marten-skins for four blankets, packed in a sack made from the stomach of one of the goats. The journey was less difficult than he had feared; he camped for one night, and reached his own village soon after dusk of the next day. Looking through the doorway, he saw his father throwing food into the fire and realized that someone must have died. He called out anxiously, but his parent, who had long since abandoned hope for his son's safety, could not believe that his voice was real, and was not convinced until he actually stood before him. The long-absent one asked for whom the food was being thrown on the fire, and his father replied:

"For you. We thought you must be dead and have burnt almost all your personal possessions."

"That does not matter," replied the son. "We have plenty of meat, grease, and furs."

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

*539 [237] As soon as the weather moderated, the rest of the party returned, each carrying enough marten skins for at least one blanket. Some had so many that three or four cloaks could be made, in addition to the large supplies of smoked goat meat and grease.

THE SUCCESS OF A LAZY HUNTER

*539 224 [177] [411] [439] In the early days, when the visit of a trading vessel to Bella Coola was a rare event, it is remembered that an *Ăsăn·ăn·i* chief bought a musket from the captain of the *Beaver*. He paid for it a pile of beaver-skins which, when stacked up, was equal in height to the length of the weapon. This was one of the first muskets owned by a Bella Coola and the chief took great care of it, never treating it roughly, and hanging it with ropes from the roof of his house whenever he was not actually using it. One day a certain *Snäkelt* asked the owner to lend him the musket to hunt goats. This was no slight request, and it was surprising, since *Snäkelt* was not a hunter, but merely packed in meat killed by others. At first the chief was unwilling to allow his prized weapon out of his sight, but at last consented when *Snäkelt* promised to give him half the goats that he might kill.

Snäkelt probably thought that even temporary possession of the mysterious musket would make it possible for him to kill goats, but when he had climbed up into the mountains, and stalked for hours, he had not succeeded even in approaching one. He knew that if he returned home, unsuccessful and without some plausible excuse, he would be laughed to scorn, so he determined to cover his failure. First he beat the musket on a boulder until it was bent and battered, then he took a sharp rock and pounded himself until he was covered with blood from head to foot, as if he had been caught in a land-slide. When near the village, he lay down on the ground and called faintly for help; at first the people could not locate the sound, but after a short search someone found the would-be hunter, apparently in the last stages of exhaustion. Help was called, and *Snäkelt* carried home, moaning feebly and saying that he would die. He could just whisper that he had been caught in a slide on the other side of the mountain, this explanation being necessary since no one had heard one in the near vicinity. As the apparent sufferer was lying in his house, one man noticed that the patient's wounds were from gashes, not from bruises, and loudly protested that *Snäkelt* must have mutilated himself to conceal his lack of success. Everyone came crowding around and agreed that this must be the case; *Snäkelt* finally admitted the deception and congratulated his discoverer on his powers of observation. After a few days, he was as well as ever, but the chief had lost his precious musket.

5: Smith E-5 (1920-1923)1929 NE6 Bellacoola NE6
Carrier NE7
Tsimshian NE15
Sekani NE14

Abies sp.

Northern Carrier: Bark boiled in water and the decoction taken internally as a purgative.

Gum used as an ointment on wounds, and especially on burns.

Sikani: Gum applied to wounds.

Gitksan: Juicy inner bark, scraped from the trunk of the tree, after removal of the outer bark, taken internally for constipation.

Gum from the bark blisters taken internally as a purgative and diuretic for "consumption," gonorrhoea, and many other serious ailments. Applied externally to cuts and sores, especially the sores of gonorrhoea.

The young cones, obtainable in August, sliced across, mashed, and used for the same purposes as the gum from the bark blisters.

See also fern, page 48.

Pseudotsuga taxifolia Britt., Douglas Fir

Bella Coola: Gum boiled and taken internally, while warm, as a diuretic for gonorrhoea.

Gum, spread on red cedar bark, applied to cuts. (One informant said that although gum of scrub pine (*see* page 49), hemlock (*see* page 51), and tideland spruce (*see* page 51) were good, Douglas fir gum made cuts worse.)

Gum mixed with dogfish (shark) oil or, if that were not available, eulachon oil, taken, two spoonfuls at a time, with warm water, as an emetic and purgative for colds, rheumatism, gonorrhoea, constipation, intestinal pains, and diarrhoea.

Southern Carrier: Not used.

Gitksan: Not used.

Tsuga heterophylla (Raf.) Sarg., Western Hemlock, and **Tsuga Mertensiana** Carr, Mountain Hemlock

Bella Coola: Leaves chewed and applied to burns.

See also scrub pine (page 49).

Gum warmed and applied to cuts. Not boiled for a diuretic for gonorrhoea.

Burning twigs applied to the skin for various internal ailments.

Southern Carrier: Not used.

Gitksan: Not used.

Picea sitchensis Carr., Tideland Spruce

Bella Coola: Tips of small, but not of large, spruces mixed with blue currant (*Ribes bracteosum* Dougl.), young juneberry (*Amelanchier florida* Lindl.), and crushed branches (leaves and stems) of garden snowberry (*Symphoricarpus racemosa* Michx.), boiled and taken internally for gonorrhoea.

Sap from the peeled trunk taken in doses of from half a cup to a cupful as a laxative from May to August.

5: Smith E-5 (1920-1923)1929 NE6 Bellacoola NE6
Carrier NE7
Tsimshian NE5

Smoke from the burning roots inhaled for bad dreams, influenza, and rheumatism (a remedy avoided by medicine men, lest it destroy their magical power). Roots themselves considered poisonous.

Leaves used to sit or lie on when taking a sweat bath for rheumatism; also spread over the afflicted parts.

Calla palustris L., WATER ARUM

Gitksan: Roots well boiled and the decoction taken internally for cleaning the eyes of the blind, for hemorrhage, for short breath, and influenza.

LILIACEAE, LILY FAMILY

Clintonia uniflora Kunth., QUEENS CUP

Bella Coola: Boiled and used to wash the body. One leaf toasted and applied as a poultice to eyes or wounds.

Southern Carrier: Not used.

Gitksan: Not used.

Smilacina racemosa L., FALSE SOLOMON'S SEAL

Bella Coola: Not used.

Southern Carrier: Not used.

Gitksan: Roots boiled and decoction taken internally as a very strong medicine for rheumatism, sore back, and kidney trouble. A purgative. Bark and leaves useless. Roots mashed and bound on cuts.

Veratrum viride Ait., FALSE HELLEBORE

Bella Coola: Small bulbs or scrapings of large bulbs, boiled, and one cupful or less of the decoction, according to the strength of the patient, taken internally for chronic cough, gonorrhoea, constipation, pain in the stomach, and many illnesses. Two or three cupfuls acted as an emetic. Said to be poisonous if eaten raw.

Small pieces of the raw root swallowed with a little cold water as an emetic for pains in the stomach. More water taken if all the pieces not vomited. Overdose considered fatal.

See also scrub pine (page 48).

Southern Carrier: Entire roots dried in the sun, and powdered by rubbing on a stone. About a dessertspoonful of the powder taken in hot water as an emetic for sickness. Too strong a decoction considered fatal.[1]

SALICACEAE, WILLOW FAMILY

Salix lasiandra Benth., WILLOW

Bella Coola: Six sticks about a foot long charred, and pulverized on a stone. A teaspoonful of the powder taken in a cupful of cold water for diarrhoea. Said to effect a cure in two or three hours.

A piece of the inner bark folded once and the folded edge inserted into a knife cut; other edges then separated and flattened down, and the wound covered with eagle down. Thought to make the pus come out. Same process used to heal incisions in the abdomen made by those who tried to cure pain in the stomach.

Southern Carrier: Not used.

Gitksan: Not used.

[1] The late Dr. C. F. Newcombe informed the writer that this plant seems to be used by every tribe in whose territory it grows.

6:Boas E-5 (1886-ca. 1890)1892
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

They resolved to make an attempt to burn it and to break open the door. On the following day they came up to the village, but the guard on the towers used their guns to such good effect that the enemy had to retreat with severe losses. They made still another attempt, but with no better success. They had lost many men, while only two old men of the Talio'mH, Tumxt'akyas and A'lk'ins by name, and one woman had been hurt. The latter had been killed. When the Kwakiutl turned back a messenger was at once sent up to the lake to call the young men, who then went to Naqa'lkH to ask for help. The Kwakiutl passed close to Nuak'zlu'sta's father's canoe, but they were so terrified by the losses they had sustained that they passed by without so much as noticing it. Two of their number were so ashamed of their defeat that they would rather remain in the enemy's country than return with their friends, and they stayed ashore. Meanwhile the Talio'mH and the Bilqula were pursuing the fugitives. They had reached the outlet of Bentinck Arm without overtaking them. Then their chiefs resolved to return, as they believed that their enemies had a long start upon them. Later on they learnt that the Kwakiutl were at that moment only a few miles from them, about to continue their homeward journey, after having encamped at the outlet of the channel. Afterwards the Talio'mH found the two men who had remained ashore. They called them and promised to send them back to their friends, saying that the war had ended, and that they had no grudge against them. The men were, however, too much afraid, and finally starved to death.

Later on the Talio'mH and Bilqula organised an expedition against the Kwakiutl to take revenge for the unprovoked attack. A chief named Koani'la, whose father was a Talio'mH, while his mother was a Kwakiutl, was their leader. They intended to attack the Lō'kwiltok' and the Kwē'k·aōt'enoq. When they approached the village of the latter they sent a canoe ahead to search for the village, and to report the number of houses. For two days they were unable to find the village, which lies in a labyrinth of islands; but finally they found it, and saw that it consisted of sixteen houses. On the next morning they attacked it. The tribe was wholly taken by surprise and almost all of them were killed. Koani'la's mother lived at this place, and when she heard the Bilqula coming she asked at once for her son, and was taken care of by him. Only five men and four women escaped. The Bilqula allowed these to run away, as they had killed as many as they desired. Anuknt'teem, a chief of the Smqtlx'mh, was the only man of the Bilqula who was wounded. He died on the way home. They returned, but in the country of the Nā'koartok' they were overtaken by four Kwakiutl canoes which pursued them. The Bilqula were victorious, but Koani'la induced them to desist. During the fight two of the women, whom they had taken as slaves, and one boy jumped overboard, and were rescued by the Kwakiutl.

Medicine.

Boils are treated by cauterisation with dry bark or with gunpowder. Sometimes a series of parallel cuts is made over swellings or boils. Fractured bones are set, and fastened between splints of cedar-bark.

Emenata of shark oil or olachen oil are given by means of a kelp tube, with a mouthpiece made of the wing-bone of an eagle. Snake poison is collected and used as a poison. Women wear tight anklets 'to prevent